

No Objection to Declassification in Part 2009/12/04 : NLN-NSC-665-3-23-9

[Redacted]

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
25 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

MIDDLE EAST

Situation Report Number 79
(as of 1130 EDT)

THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

(All times cited in military paragraphs are Cairo/Tel Aviv time, unless otherwise specified.)

1. Both the Syrian and Egyptian fronts were generally quiet through the morning. An Israeli spokesman reported "sporadic, unorganized fighting by encircled Egyptian troops on the east bank," but said most of the southern and all of the northern canal front were quiet. Cairo accused Israel of using "guided missiles and napalm" against the oil port of Suez this morning.

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SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITY

2. No Soviet reaction to reports of US military alerts has been noted. Soviet military activity generally remains normal.

[Redacted]

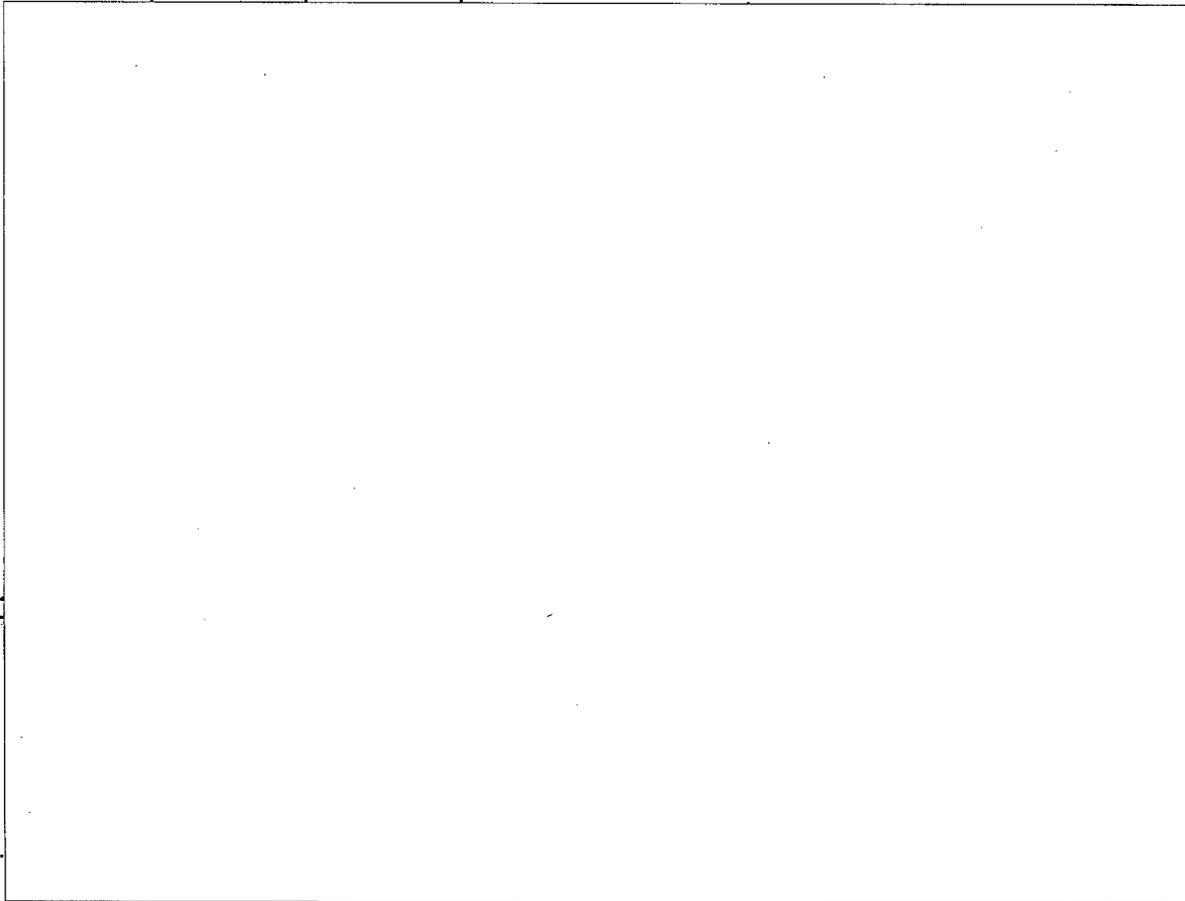
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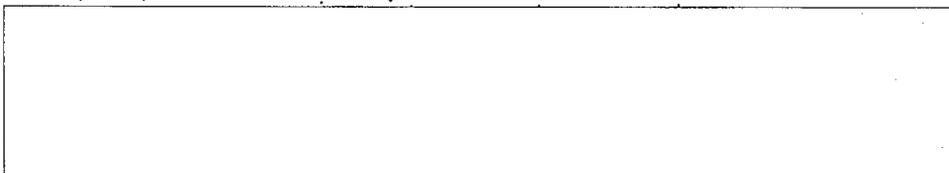
Surveillance by Soviet naval units continues. The bulk of the Soviet naval forces in the Mediterranean remain in the Crete area and there have been no major changes in their disposition during the past 24 hours.

SOVIET AIRLIFT

6. The Soviet airlift to the Middle East appears to be picking up again. Of the 11 AN-22 transports

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scheduled for Cairo today, only six have landed.

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In addition, an IL-18

VIP transport departed Moscow

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EGYPTIAN FRONT

7. The only fighting reported this morning is in the vicinity of Suoz where Cairo claimed Israeli forces were attacking the city with tanks and artillery at noon. Earlier press reports from Cairo described the front as quiet. Tel Aviv claims that Egyptian forces have violated the cease-fire at several points in the southern sector including the area near Suez.

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An Israeli spokesman characterized the fighting as sporadic, unorganized, and limited to the east bank of the southern sector. He claimed most of the southern front and all of the northern front remained quiet.

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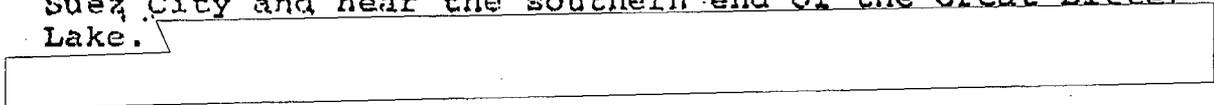
10. An Israeli military spokesman claimed Egyptian forces in the southern sector violated the cease-fire at least four times during the night. At 0245Z, he said, Egyptian forces fired from the east to the west bank at

[Redacted]



the southern tip of the Great Bitter Lake and wounded 15 Israeli soldiers. About one hour later, he said, Egyptian soldiers were seen crossing from the west to east banks in the same area. Between 0700 and 0824, Egyptian forces on the east bank reportedly fired at Israeli positions on the west bank in the vicinity of Suez City and near the southern end of the Great Bitter Lake.

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SYRIAN FRONT

11. The Syrian front continues quiet with no reports of ground activity. Israel is maintaining a moderate level of air activity over the front with shallow penetrations of southern Lebanon. The flights appear to be defensive patrols, however.

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12. [redacted] the following information on Syrian air force and army losses as of 19 October. The combined Syrian/Iraqi aircraft losses totaled more than 270 including helicopters. In addition, 11 of the 12 Egyptian MIG aircraft stationed in Syria also were destroyed. The air force suffered many casualties including pilot trainees who engaged in air strikes along the Golan Heights.

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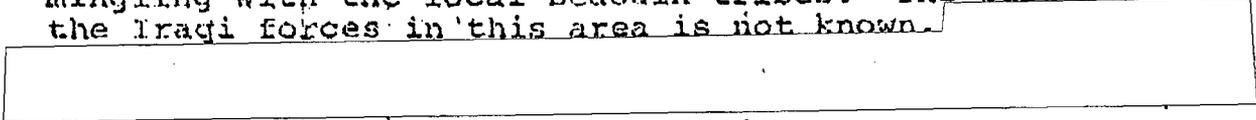
[redacted] the Syrian army lost 1,100 tanks by 19 October. This total is somewhat higher than US estimates. [redacted] by 11 October, Syria had depleted its stock of surface-to-air missiles and by 19 October Syria had only a few operational SAM launchers. If this report is true, the Soviets resupplied the Syrian SAM stocks because Israeli aircraft have been destroyed by Syrian air defenses since 19 October.

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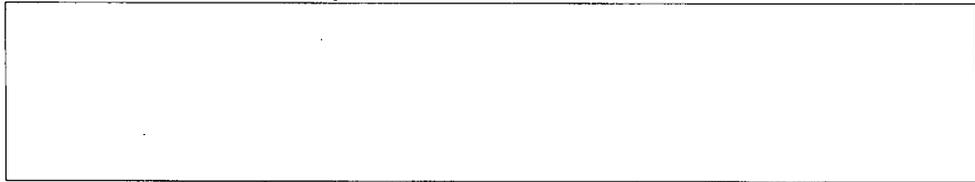
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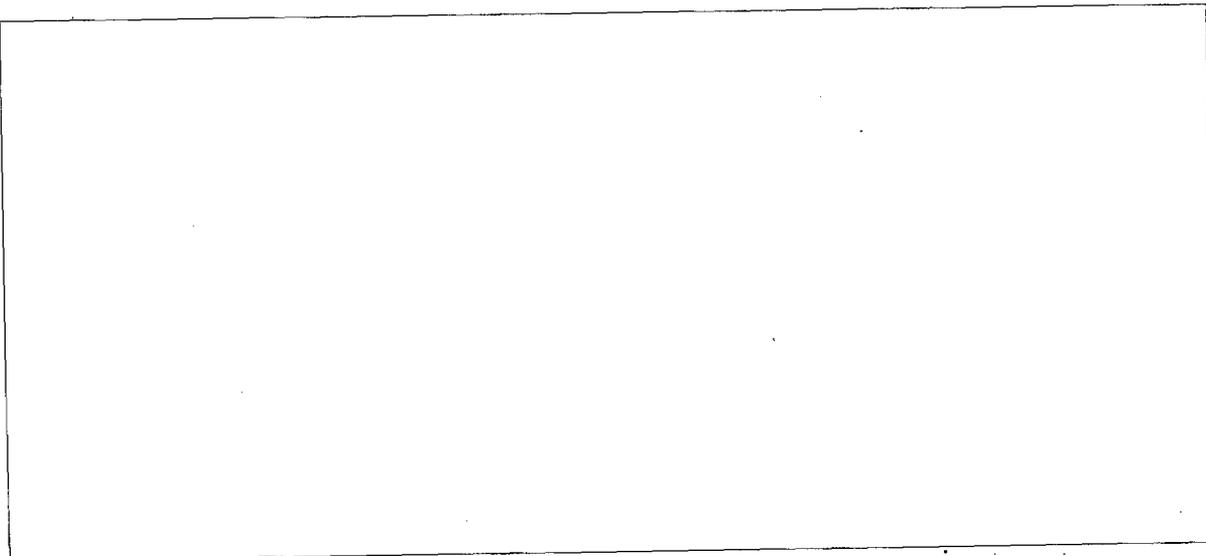
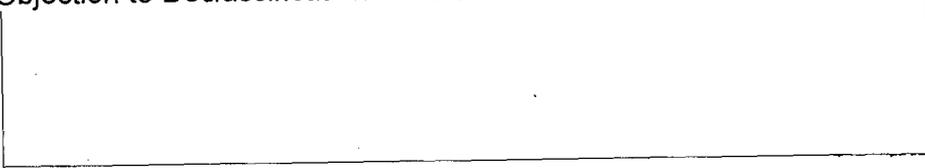
13. [redacted] Iraqi "reconnaissance forces" have crossed into Jordan and are mingling with the local Bedouin tribes. The purpose of the Iraqi forces in this area is not known.

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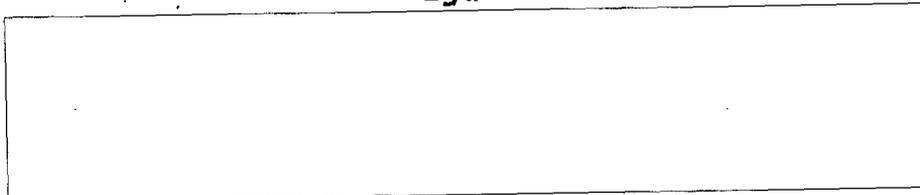
UNITED NATIONS

16. The UN Security Council is meeting at this hour to debate the non-aligned resolution calling for a creation of a UN emergency peacekeeping force and an enlarged observer force for the Middle East. The sponsors hope for a vote today. The USUN mission, however, points out that the ambiguous nature of some of the key operational portions of the resolution raises serious questions regardless its implementation. While the implementation would strain the facilities of the UN Secretariat, it would enlarge promptly the observer teams; Finland and Denmark have offered to provide additional officers.

17. Meanwhile, UN truce supervision teams continue their deployment on the battlefield. According to an Israeli press report in Egypt six teams have taken up positions, five more are on their way to their positions, and the remaining two have not yet been dispatched. In Syria, this press report says, three observer teams have left Damascus for the front and three from the Israeli side are preparing to depart.

BREZHNEV SPEECH

18. Press reports that Soviet party chief Brezhnev has "canceled" a "scheduled" speech at the opening session



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of the World Peace Conference overstate the case. There is no firm evidence that Brezhnev was scheduled to address the conference, and Radio Moscow routinely reported the opening and closing of the session. The president of the council noted only that Brezhnev had been "invited" to speak and that it was hoped he would do so "when it is possible."

LATE ITEMS

18. The chief of Israeli military intelligence, General Zeira, claimed today that the Egyptian Third Army is totally isolated on the east bank between the Great Bitter Lake and Suez City. He reported that the force consists of about 30,000 men and 200 tanks from the 7th, 19th, and remnants of the 6th infantry divisions. He admitted that the easternmost positions of the Third Army were at least 9 to 12 miles from the canal. Zeira said Israeli forces had located and cut water pipelines crossing the canal and claimed that the Third Army was short of fuel, ammunition, water, and food.

19. General Zeira reported that the city of Suez is totally surrounded and Israeli forces control all the supply lines to the city and to the Third Army. The Israeli navy is patrolling the northern Gulf of Suez to complete the blockade of the Third Army by sea. Zeira added that any aircraft or helicopters landing or taking off from the Third Army area would be shot down.

IRAQ-USSR

20. Three MI-6 helicopters flew from the USSR via Turkey to Baghdad on 24 October. These helicopters, as well as one that flew in and two that arrived by sea last month, were probably ordered by Baghdad under a \$13.5 million agreement signed in 1972. The MI-6, which is the world's largest operational helicopter, will increase the mobility of Iraqi ground forces.

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